

# Language Matters: Speaking of Suicide

Say This	Instead of This	Why
A person living with bipolar disorder	The person is bipolar	The diagnosis does not define the person-it is merely one aspect of who they are.
A person living with a substance use disorder	The person is a drug addict	The diagnosis does not define the person-it is merely one aspect of who they are.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Died by Suicide</li> <li>• Took their own life</li> <li>• Killed themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committed Suicide or</li> <li>• Completed Suicide or</li> <li>• Successful Suicide</li> </ul>	<p>Implies crime, wrongdoing, sin</p> <p>Completing something and success are typically good-Not for suicide!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survived a Suicide Attempt</li> <li>• Non-fatal Suicide Attempt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsuccessful Suicide</li> <li>• Failed Suicide Attempt</li> </ul>	<p>Unsuccessful and failed imply bad outcomes-Again, not for suicide!</p> <p>Do not want to imply failure or lack of success to a person who survives their suicide attempt</p>
Suicide Attempt Survivor	Suicide Survivor	Clarifies that the person survived their suicide attempt
Suicide Loss Survivor	Suicide Survivor	Clarifies that the person survives the loss of a loved one to death by suicide

Source of information on language regarding suicide: [www.speakingofsuicide.com](http://www.speakingofsuicide.com)